

<b>DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION</b>		Number: 1450-001
SUBJECT: Radio and Television	DATE: November 12, 1986	
	OPI: Radio and Television Division, Office of Governmental and Public Affairs	

1 PURPOSE

This regulation prescribes the policies and procedures for radio and television activities for all agencies and staff offices of the USDA.

2 POLICY

a Disseminating Information. The policy of the USDA is to use mass media as well as other methods to report, explain, and interpret to the public and specific interest groups the policies, regulations, programs and activities of the USDA.

b Working Relations With Outside Media. The policy of the USDA is to cooperate with media representatives when at-all possible to do so. This includes radio and television reporters and crews. Agencies contacted directly by electronic media representatives should work directly with those representatives. However, the agency person assigned to work with the media representative should also report the details of the media contact to the Chief of OI's Radio and Television Division.

3 DEFINITIONS

a Radio

(1) Radio News Story. Information of a topical nature that is "perishable" must be handled immediately to be of use to radio stations--may be the reporter making a single voice report or the reporter plus excerpts from recorded comments by one or more newsmakers.

- (2) Radio Features. Programs of varying lengths that contain information that may be topical with a relatively short use period or that is useful at anytime.
- (3) Radio Interview. Question and answer sessions conducted in the studio, in an office, or in the field. Normally the interviews are conducted by USDA radio personnel and qualified agency field staff personnel but, under certain circumstances, can be conducted by others, ie., by Land- Grant University radio personnel. Interviews may be conducted person-to-person or by telephone.
- (4) Radio Documentary. Normally thought of as a "produced show" as opposed to a straight interview program. This type of program can be as simple as excerpted actualities from a single interview put together with voiced "wraparound" scripting, or it can be more complex, as with excerpted comments from several recorded interviews with different people, plus voiced wraparounds, music, and sound effects.

b Television

- (1) Television Program. Normally thought of as a regularly produced show as in a series and of a standard length, such as a program that will fill a half-hour slot of time on a station's program log. An example of a television program, using this definition, is USDA's weekly half hour, magazine-format program, A BETTER WAY, which is produced each week to be exactly 28:45 in length.
- (2) Television Feature. Produced segments of varying lengths that contain information that may be topical with a moderate length use period or that is useful at anytime.
- (3) Television.,Interview. Question and answer sessions conducted "live" in the studio as part of a regular television program or filmed or videotaped in an office, laboratory, or in the field. Normally conducted by USDA television personnel and qualified field staff personnel.
- (4) Television News Feature. Topical information produced in a news style and of a length appropriate for use in a news program.
- (5) Television Actuality. An excerpt from an interview with a newsmaker that is provided without voiced wrap-arounds but with explanatory material provided so the station's newscaster or farm broadcaster can voice his or her own news story using the actuality.

4 ABBREVIATIONS

CFR	-	Code of Federal Regulations
OGPA	-	Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

OI	-	Office of Information, OGPA
PSA	-	Public Service Announcement
USC	-	United States Code
USDA	-	United States Department of Agriculture

## 5 FORMS

AD-797	-	Audiovisual Proposal Form
AD-845	-	Request for Video and Film Services

## 6 RESPONSIBILITIES

### a The Director, OI, will:

- (1) Determine policy and provide leadership and centralized operational direction for all USBA and agency information activities so that they shall promote understanding about USDA policies, programs and activities.
- (2) Exercise final review and approval of all public information material prepared by the USDA and its agencies and to select the most effective methods of presenting this information to the intended audience.
- (3) Direct and coordinate development of programs, plans, procedures and standards for the information activities of the USDA and its agencies, both in Washington, D.C. and in the field.

### b Agency Information Directors will:

- (1) obtain written prior approval from the Director, OI on promotions and new appointments at any grade level to radio and television positions in the Washington, D.C. headquarters area, and the written approval must be obtained before initiating such promotions or new appointments. Radio and television positions are those in which the person spends a majority of his/her time in radio and/or television activities.
- (2) Obtain prior approval from the USDA Audiovisual Manager for all proposed purchases of audiovisual equipment (which includes radio and television equipment) costing \$1,000 or more. Proposed purchases by field office shall be routed through the agency's Audiovisual Control Officer for prior approval from the USDA Audiovisual Manager.

(3) Will submit for approval all proposals to produce radio and television public service announcements to the USDA Audiovisual Manager. Proposals to produce and distribute television public service announcements are to be submitted on Form AD-797, "Audiovisual Proposal Form." Agencies shall submit scripts for approval for both radio and television PSA's to the Radio and Television Division Chief for approval. Final productions will also be submitted for approval before duplication copies are made. Agency information directors will submit plans for distributing PSA's prior to distribution. All production work is coordinated through OIs Video and Film Division. Agency Information Directors will submit cover letters to accompany PSA's for distribution, surveys pertaining to the USDA's broadcast services, and other business pertaining to the USDA's broadcast services to the Radio and Television Division Chief for signature. Proposed PSA's must meet all the criteria of public service announcements and must not attempt to propagandize.

(4) Use the same procedure outlined in b(3) above in submitting proposals for other videotape productions intended for use on television.

## 7 RESTRICTIONS

a Promotion. Radio and television material shall not be used to promote the USDA, its agencies, or individuals. More specifically, USDA radio and television material that would be considered as "puffery" or "self-aggrandizement" will not be produced or distributed. Also USDA radio and television material will not be used to advance USDA, agency, or individual opinions on broad subjects without specific program reference.

b Influencing Legislation. USDA radio or television materials may discuss the pros and cons of issues even after the issues have been introduced in bill form before either or both houses of Congress. However, at no time will the materials lobby by soliciting direct support for pending legislation. Also, care must be taken not to be in the posture of selling pending legislation. Every effort must be toward providing information in as unbiased a manner as possible.

c Endorsements, Commercial References and Use of Brand Names. The USDA's policy is to avoid endorsement, directly or indirectly, of any commercial enterprise or product whenever possible. However, it is recognized that occasions may arise when mention of specific commercial enterprise or product is in the public interest or is difficult if not impossible to avoid. These occasions must be fully justified.

d History, Art, Research. USDA radio and television productions dealing in history and art should be for the purpose of educating and informing and should not be used to promote the USDA or its personnel.

e Employees as Performers. The following regulate the use of Department employees as performers:

(1) USDA employees shall not appear as performers in government audiovisual productions, except:

(a) When they are performing their own job;  
and

(b) When successful completion of the production depends on availability of specialized skills or technical knowledge that is not readily available from professional acting sources.

(2) USDA employees shall not be used as performers in any radio or television production that subjects them to health or safety hazards that exceed those normally encountered in their own jobs.

## 8 REVIEW

a OI Review and Approval. The Chief of the OI Radio and Television Division shall approve all radio and television materials, including public service announcements, to be distributed or disseminated on a national basis.

b OI Delegation of Review. Under certain circumstances, the Chief, OI Radio and Television Division may delegate to agency information directors the responsibility of final review and approval. Most generally these circumstances would be in regards to agency field operations. The procedure for this delegation shall be:

(1) Agency field offices shall propose new, regular radio and/or television services through the agency's information director to OI's Chief of Radio and Television Division for initial approval and delegation of authority to the agency information director for the orderly and proper conduct of the service and for the establishment of quality standards and controls.

(2) The agency information director shall make an annual report by May 15 pertaining to the service to OI's Radio and Television Division Chief, including information as to the number of services produced, number of stations receiving such service, and any evaluation that may be available as to the usefulness of the service.

## 9 LETTER OF AGREEMENT

a An agency information director may ask that one or more exceptions to the rules and regulations governing conduct of radio and television activities be considered. The duration for exceptions granted will be 1 year. The exception(s) must be spelled out in an annual Letter of Agreement addressed to the Chief of OI's Radio and Television Division. Deadline for this annual letter of Agreement is May 15. The Chief of Radio and Television Division shall respond to requests for exception(s) within 2 weeks following the deadline.

b An agency information director who does not seek an exception(s) to the radio and television rules and regulations as they stand does not need to submit a Letter of Agreement.

## 10 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

a The USDA and its agencies shall be the major sources of information used in radio and television programs and news stories. Other sources may be used from time to time When the need or circumstances to do so can be clearly justified. These include:

- (1) Land-Grant Universities. An unique partnership arrangement exists in food and fiber research, extension and teaching between the Land Grant Universities and the USDA. Information from Land Grant University researchers and extension specialists and agents may be reported in USDA radio and television programs and news stories when such information is not readily available from USDA sources.
- (2) Commodity Organizations. Information from commodity groups and associations cooperating with the USDA may be used provided the information does not try to solicit support for legislation and is not construed as out-and-out promotion of a commodity.
- (3) Commercial Organizations. Normally information from commercial organizations will not be reported on USDA radio and television programs and news stories. However, when necessary to show the different sides of an issue, excerpts from interviews with representatives of commercial organizations may be used. Questions pertaining to particular individuals and/or organizations should be referred to the Chief of OI Radio and Television.
- (4) Representatives of Farm Organizations, Individual Farmers and Others. Excerpts from recorded speeches and interviews may be used in USDA radio and television programs and news stories when the individual has appeared at a USDA-sponsored event or when a program segment or documentary is being produced to illustrate various points of view about an issue.

## 11 REPORTER IDENTIFICATION

USDA radio and television personnel shall identify themselves in the reports and news stories they produce and voice as reporting for the USDA, not the agency for which they work.

## 12 AUDIOVISUAL MANAGEMENT/CONTROL PLAN

USDA's audiovisual management/control plan, as required by OMB Bulletin No. 81-16 issued June 5, 1981, encompasses both public information and education/training audiovisual products. Form AD 797 is the audiovisual project proposal form. The form requires that agency audiovisual control Officers must sign the certification statement for each proposed audiovisual project. The form is then submitted for approval to the USDA Audiovisual Manager, who presently is the Chief, Radio and television Division.

